Dear Quaker Life Rep,

We wanted to let you know what’s happening with Quaker Life Representative Council (QLRC) in 2024. It was already going to look different from how it’s been in past years, but now it’s changing again.

You may recall that we planned to experiment in 2024 by having three regional gatherings across the year, each of them blended in-person and online, and based at a meeting house or other venue in the relevant part of Britain. The idea was for QLRC Reps in those nations and regions to gather together, but in a way that didn’t require such long travel. It could also help to strengthen links between neighbouring AMs and Quaker communities.

Sadly, we’re not going to be able to deliver that this year. The QLRC Planning Group is significantly under strength, with only two people on it at present; the staff who support the organisation and delivery of QLRC haven’t had the capacity to get this done in time. Both they and we very much regret that. But we also don’t want to ask dedicated Friends and staff to do ever more with fewer people – care of those working for and serving us is also a part of our Quaker life. We fully expect that we will have the regional QLRC gatherings in 2025, when we hope the Planning Group will be bigger and the staff fully able to support them.

However, we think there is an opportunity to spend time as a national Quaker community looking at the issues that QLRCs often look at, such as the theology of modern Quakerism, membership and belonging, being a spiritual community, or outreach. On 18-20 October there is a major conference on the Future of British Quakerism, organised by Woodbrooke in collaboration with BYM. Meetings will be encouraged to send representatives; these might be QLRC reps or might be other Friends. As this event is about the future of British Quakerism, meetings may want to consider sending newer or younger people who can expect to be around for more of that future. But regardless of who attends, we hope that the conference and its outcomes will help guide QLRC, and British Quakers more generally, into 2025 and beyond.

In Friendship

Jen Neal       Oliver Robertson

Convenor      Head of Witness and Worship

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